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EUGENE ORMANDY

The eminent director of the Minneapolis Orchestra
who conducts entirely from memory. (See Page 267)

EDITORIAL

*To Our Readers and Friends We Wish
A Most Happy and Prosperous New Year*

LOOKING backward over the past year, we are greatly impressed with the growth of recorded music and the many unusual and artistic achievements that the various companies have brought forth. Unquestionably, the high-water mark of the year was the Roth String Quartet's excellent performance of Bach's *Art of the Fugue*. At the same time, there were so many close seconds that one would not know where to begin if called upon to name them.

We had hoped to review some of the important items on the *Special List of Red Seal Records* that Victor brought out around December 1st, but review copies were unfortunately delayed, so these reviews will have to be included next month. In the meantime, we recommend to the attention of all discriminating music lovers the Pro Arte Quartet's performance of Bela-Bartok's *Quartet in A Minor, Opus 7*, the Budapest String Quartet's performance of Mozart's *C Major Quartet, K-465*, and the Schnabel and Piatigorsky performance of Beethoven's early *Cello Sonata in G Minor, Opus 5, No. 2*.

* * * *

We are given to understand that the Decca Record Company, heretofore manufacturers of inexpensive records, are going to enter the classical record field with a higher priced record in the near future. Many of our readers will be interested to know that Sir Henry Wood's much criticized recordings, made by English Decca, which have incited no end of

comment in England and provoked a verbal battle between two music editors of rival publications, are to be among early releases; and that all recordings made by the Parlophon and Odeon Companies in Europe will be exclusively issued from now on by Decca in this country.

* * * *

We wish to call attention to an interesting and outstanding collection of historical recordings, compiled by the German musicologist Curt Sachs, known as the *Anthologie Sonore*, which is being brought out by a society recently formed in France with the expressed idea of compiling a synthesis of the musical arts from the Middle Ages up to the beginning of the 19th Century.

It is the intention of this society to issue their collection in a yearly series of twenty doubled sided discs. Great care has been taken in the selection of the music, which is chosen with the idea of filling in many important gaps in the recorded repertory, and also in the choice of the artists.

The first year's recording, already placed upon the market in two sets of ten discs each, gives us a fine collection of historical selections dating from the 12th Century to the 17th Century. Readers wishing information regarding these recordings should write to the American representatives of the *Anthologie Sonore*: The Gramophone Shop, 18 East 43rd Street, New York City.

The Often Irrelevant Cadenza

or Some Ramblings on Florid Music

BY PHILIP MILLER

IN 1777, Giambattista Mancini wrote: "A cadenza is a necessity at the end of every song. Even if the song is a masterpiece, it will be languishing and unfinished without one." Those were the days of florid singing; of sound for its own sake — the heyday of the singer, if not of the art of singing. It was then that the star system flourished as never before or since. It was every man for himself, and the devil take the composer.

The star system is a necessary evil in the musical world. It has existed since the beginnings of art, and will endure as long as music itself. Some musicians will always be better than others, and some will make their way by personal glamour and temperament. This would be fair enough if the public were not so lacking in discrimination. It is true that a good thing properly presented will usually succeed, but then so will mediocrity. Unfortunately this shifts the attention of the audience from the composer to the interpreter. The public goes to hear an artist — not his program. And those of us who have attended performances to hear favorite works done by unknown musicians have learned not to do so again. If the Philharmonic includes the *Mendelssohn Concerto* on its program, a well-known violinist must be engaged to play it, for only an outstanding performance can make the work interesting either to the layman, who needs a personality to hold his attention, or to the musician, who has heard this *Concerto* far too often already. As long as Rosa Ponselle is at hand to sing *La Gioconda*, no one is going to want to hear the opera when the Metropolitan gives it without her. Yes, the star system is necessary, but in Utopia every artist will be a star in his own right.

All music began with song, and it is not surprising that the first musical stars were singers. We can definitely date the system from A. D. 367, although it is certainly older than that. We know that when the Council of Laodicea forbade congregational singing in church, the star singer took the place he occupies to this day. All solo singers had to be ordained, and, says Henderson, "that they speedily acquired the self glory which has clung to singers ever since is proved by the records of contemporaries." They seized every opportunity to display the range and flexibility of their voices, by superimposing on their chants all manner of roulades, divisions and grades.

From that time on the history of singing is a series of periods — alternately of excess and reform. The originators of opera as we know it — the Florentine group back in 1600 — were protesting against the vocal embroidery which every singer added to his part in the madrigal operas popular at that time. They planned a return to dramatic truth — and in the carrying out of this idea, they were willing to sacrifice all the purely decorative features of music.

In the preface to his *Nuove Musiche* (1602), Caccini, one of these reformers, wrote: "When I now see many of these pieces torn apart and altered in form, when I see to what evil use the long runs are put, to wit, those consisting of single and double notes, (repeated ones), as if both kinds were combined, and which were invented by me in order to do away with the former old fashion of introduced passages, which were for wind or stringed instruments rather than the human voice; when further I see how dynamic gradations of tone are used without discrimina-

tion, what enunciation now is, how trills, gruppetti and other ornaments are introduced, I considered it necessary — and in this I am upheld by my friends — to have my music printed."

The primary function of singing — that quality which sets it apart from instrumental music — is the human expressiveness imparted to it by the text. Unfortunately, it seems that those who are gifted to interpret the literature of song rarely realize this, and frequently neglect either the expressive or the musical and technical side of their art. This lack of balance — often merely a lack of right conception — accounts not only for the scarcity of singers of the first rank, but also for the low regard in which vocalists are held among musicians generally. Any opportunity to show off appeals to the average singer, however damaging the effect may be upon the music he is singing. In justice it should be remembered, however, that, as the growth of the instrumental concerto proves, singers have not been the only offenders.

The original purpose of floridity was to show not only the artist's technical skill, but also (and primarily) his ability to improvise. A composer merely gave him a point of departure, and he was expected to go the limits of ingenuity and imagination in embellishment. "Without varying the airs," wrote Pier Francesco Tosi, in 1723, "the knowledge of the singers could never be discovered; but from the nature of the variations, it will be easily discerned in two of the greatest singers which is the best." Never should a singer sing an exact repetition; never should his variations be planned beforehand.

But, it seems, contemporary singers carried things too far for Tosi. "Every air," he tells us, "has (at least) three cadences, that are all three final. Generally speaking, the study of the singers of the present day consists in terminating the cadence of the first part with an overflowing of passages and divisions at pleasure and the orchestra waits; in that of the second the dose is increased, and the orchestra grows tired; but on the last cadence, the throat is set a going, like a weathercock in a whirlwind, and the orchestra yawns. But why must the world be thus continually

deafened with so many divisions? I must (with your leave, gentlemen moderns) say in favour of the profession, that good taste does not consist in a continual velocity of the voice, which goes thus rambling on, without a guide, and without foundation; but rather in the cantabile, in the putting forth the voice agreeably, in appoggiaturas, in art, and the true notion of graces, going from one one to another with singular and unexpected surprises, and stealing the time exactly on the true motion of the bass." Herein lies, incidentally, a truth of which most modern singers seem to be completely ignorant. That elusive quality which we call "style" in the singing of the music of the old masters, depends, as much as on anything else, upon the ability of the artist to execute his passage-work without losing time. True rhythm is elastic, and no great artist sings or plays metronomically; if he steals time here he makes it up there — big retards are exceptional.

Turning again to Mancini, we find the following valuable explanation of the cadenza. "Before entering fully upon this topic, I must tell you that among singers there are two very well defined opinions concerning them. The first is, that a cadenza must be prepared first with *messa di voce*, and that which follows must be a recapitulation of the song, in which the different passages of the melody are entwined. All of them must be well distributed, even and sustained in one breath, and added to them must be the customary trill.

"The other opinion is that a cadenza is a complete and arbitrary thing to a singer, so much so as to enable him to make use of all the various passages and tricks in which he can make a complete display of the agility of his voice and of his particular ability.

"There is no doubt, but that the first opinion is the correct one, and coherent with good judgment. A cadenza is only an epilogue to the song. The second may be more suitable to the singer who, by a display of tones given in quick succession, startles his audiences, who may prefer to be surprised by quantity of notes, rather than by an exhibition of art and common sense . . ."

The great reformer of this period was Christoph Willibald von Gluck. After conventional beginnings as a composer of opera, he evolved some elaborate theories, and, which is more rare, acted upon them. In his music, floridity gives way to classic simplicity; vocal display to dramatic truth. Though one of the great melodists of all time, he did not sacrifice his texts to his tunes. His recitatives have the grand ring, and he gave to the orchestra an importance it had not before enjoyed in opera. Wagner declared his indebtedness to Gluck, whose music has not faded to this day. What a pity his works are so neglected!

The field of comic opera also had its great man, in the person of André Ernest Modeste Grétry. He also worked to greater expressiveness, and arrived at conclusions similar to those of Gluck. If his work is slighter than that of his great contemporary, he cast his operas generally in a smaller mold. He was less successful in serious opera than comic; and because of a lack of technical training, his bigger effects do not always come off. But there is so much that is utterly delightful in his music, that we easily overlook his faults. Gluck was an international — an Austrian writing operas on Greek subjects for the French stage — but Grétry was thoroughly French. Perhaps that accounts for the total oblivion into which he has fallen outside of France.

Only one Grétry *ariette* has ever found its way into the domestic record catalogs. It is, however, a particularly interesting one in the present connection, as it shows how this composer used coloratura for descriptive purposes. It is taken from *Zémire et Azor*, and called *La Fauvette*, or *The Warbler*: the recording artist is Galli-Curci. At the close the singer cannot resist the temptation to introduce a cadenza with flute, after the tradition which has come down to us through the generations. That Grétry approved this sort of thing is extremely doubtful.

Though less prone to publishing theories, Mozart too did his bit in the reform movement. His methods, however, were quite different. While writing some of the most difficult coloratura in the entire range of music, he managed to infuse

life into his embellishments. His is the true dramatic bravura. Only the most fluent high sopranos can tackle the grand aria in *Die Entführung*, or the *Queen of the Night's* music in *Die Zauberflöte*. But fluency is not enough, for these arias are full of venom. Rare indeed, is the soprano equipped for them. Collectors of early records will remember a version of the second *Queen of the Night* aria by the Spanish diva, Maria Galvany. As a horrible example, it should be owned by all students of Mozart. After an unbelievably unstylistic performance, again we are treated to a flute cadenza. Fortunately, singers today are not so apt to tamper thus with Mozart. Only in the *Il Re Pastore* aria is it the invariable custom to sing a cadenza with the violin — generally the cadenza of Jenny Lind, who was extremely fond of this beautiful *rondo*. In this case it is not so offensive, though it would be a welcome change to hear the air with the ending as written.

Let us now glance briefly at the operatic trends of the early nineteenth century, the Rossini-Donizetti-Bellini period. The singer — particularly the Prima Donna — has again gained the upper hand. Such is her passion for display, that frequently an aria is hardly more than a glorified cadenza. If the number is not brilliant enough, she adds all of her tricks — and, lest she be outshone by a rival, a few more for good measure.

This state of things so angered Rossini — who, after all, had the instincts of a great musician — that in one notable instance (*Bel raggio* from *Semiramide*) he deliberately wrote an aria so brilliant that there was little left to be done to it. This was the day of mad scenes; and cadenzas grew like apples on a tree. The flute was generally used as an obbligato instrument, that the soprano might show by actual comparison the purity of her voice. The composer had little to say — all was for the greater glory of the diva. Had Bellini lived longer, he might have led the way out, as he had already shown an understanding of the dramatic bravura. Spon-tini and Cherubini, too, wrote in the grand manner, but they were old-fashioned. In Germany, Weber was laying a solid found-

dation upon which Wagner was later to build.

The tide turned, of course, with Verdi and Wagner; and with them the history of opera came to a standstill. There have been a few masterpieces written since their day, but no new schools have been founded.

In the career of Verdi, the story of 19th century opera is summed up. Beginning as a writer in the old florid school — but too hot-blooded for contemporary critics — he gradually worked toward an understanding of the true possibilities of his chosen field. As an old man he wrote two of the greatest of all Italian operas. At first his arias were the conventional set numbers, ending (in the score) with simple cadenzas, but lavishly decorated in execution. At the last we find him dispensing with the aria altogether, and clothing the action with appropriate music.

The works and theories of Wagner are far too well known to need more than a passing word here. Suffice it to say that no composer who has since arisen has been altogether free of his influence. With such great song-writers as Franz and Wolf, he worked to put an end to vocalism for its own sake. The Grande Dame no longer rules the opera; and recital singing is a new and special art.

The first instrumental virtuosi were the composers themselves. Today the very meaning of the word virtuoso has changed. Originally one who excelled in musicianship, it has come to denote a technical marvel — an exponent of the brilliant and showy. Such, too, was the transformation of the solo concerto. If Bach or Handel wrote a concerto for harpsichord, it was the composer himself who played the solo part, and he did not always bother to write down exactly what he played. He was too busy to spend his time in this way, and furthermore, he did not play the same embellishments in every performance of a concerto. Following the lead of the early singers, the instrumentalist conceived and used this form to show what he could do. In the composition he allowed himself plenty of chance to improvise. As the concerto was taken over and played by others than the composer, this tradition of ex-

temporization persisted; the performer's big moment coming at the cadenza. If the virtuoso's skill was equal to the task, the effect must have been quite thrilling, gradually, however, as harmony and form became more complicated, fewer and fewer performers, or even composers themselves, were able to sustain the level of the work in hand. Thus, though in Beethoven's first four piano concertos, the pianist is expected to supply cadenzas, the master wrote in the fifth exactly what he wanted played.

There was no special form for the concerto cadenza. In it the various themes of the movement are paraded as in a free fantasia. Great fertility of inspiration is needed in handling these themes, as to recall too much of the movement would be tiresome.

With the end of the improvised cadenza, and the greater care of composers in writing down their intentions, we have come to a period when strict adherence to the text is a requisite of good performance. The gaps left in earlier works for the inspiration of the moment have been filled with elaborate cadenzas written by some of the most eminent composers. Such various names as Brahms, Medtner, Mrs. Beach, Vieuxtemps, Saint-Saens, and Fauré are to be found upon cadenzas for the Beethoven concertos, as well as those of the virtuosi Bauer, Ganz, Clara Schumann, von Bülow, Dohnányi, Flesch, Joachim, Backhaus and Kreisler.

We have seen how Mozart and others infused life into bravura singing. In a similar way decorative instrumental music can be filled with emotional content. One can hardly do better than point to the slow movement in Bach's *Italian Concerto* for an illustration. Likewise, the cadenza itself came to play a dramatic role in the music of Chopin, Liszt and their followers. Its special function here is to relieve the tension when the music has reached an emotional climax. This device was used also by Tchaikowsky in some of his songs. There are fine examples of his Opus 47 — *Wann ich gas gewusst*, and *War ich nicht ein frisches Graeslein*.

(Continued on Page 270)

On Madrigal Singing

BY PHILIP BARR

I.

FIFTEEN years ago, the music of the sixteenth century sounded—to most ears—extremely strange. Now, a great deal of it has become popular with wide audiences and (as far as English speaking audiences are concerned) this is so of one type more than any other: the English Madrigal. Here we must give special thanks to the English Singers, who have featured and sponsored this music extensively. Their artistic fame, in fact, was established through the motet and the madrigal, especially the English madrigal.

To the English Singers and to Canon E. H. Fellowes, whose editions they use and whose precepts they practice, belong the chief honor and glory for the propagation of this kind of music. With their exquisitely precise performances, given with the most pleasant and domestic informality round a table, the performers created overnight a new sort of concert, and brought home to thousands, who had never heard of it, the beauty of unaccompanied vocal part-music. Any ideas that people had on the subject of unaccompanied vocal music were confined to church music. For madrigal-singing—once a living tradition in England—was dead. In 1600, it was active in most cultivated homes, but by 1900 it was extinct—not, as so many people suppose, because of the Puritans, but because of opera, which changed England from a land of singers into a land of listeners. I am speaking here particularly of the death of madrigal-singing. The death of madrigal-composing took place considerably earlier—before the Puritans ever came into power—for reasons that are partly mysterious.

However, madrigal-singing was revived, at length, but under the worst auspices.

This was in the mid-eighteenth century when nobody remembered how a madrigal should really sound. Misled by the chains of *white* notes in the works of their Elizabethan and Jacobean forebears, and unaware that they should be sung as if they were *black*—they took these fairylike pieces at the pace of a dirge, and in large choirs, which intensified the heavy-footedness. And these evil traditions lasted through that and the next century, until arrested by the researches of such scholars as Canon Fellowes and the performances of such groups as the English Singers. As someone once said to me in London: "You in America ought to go ahead with madrigal-singing in fine style, for you are starting with the correct tradition. In England we have got to wait for a whole generation to die, before we can get rid of their false notions."

What Fellowes and the English Singers have done to revive the correct sixteenth century manner of singing a madrigal, by emphasizing in particular three points.

- (1) A rapid tempo.
- (2) Only one voice to each part.
- (3) Irregular rhythms.

Madrigal-singing, I have said, outlasted madrigal-composing in England by some years. It also preceded it by some years: madrigal-singing was in full swing in the 1580's, when almost all the existing models were Italian. The English School of madrigal-composition, though extraordinarily brilliant, was short-lived; the whole output is practically comprised between 1590 and 1620. What induced men like Weelkes and Wilbye to lay down their pens in the very prime of life is hard to say. Perhaps, it was this new invention—opera, which made them feel that the old forms were outworn; and their hearts not being in the new, they

ceased to create the old. Certainly, it was not in their natures to be reactionary, for within the framework of the madrigal they were among the most progressive spirits of their day. If their music does not abound in the unprepared dissonances, transpositions and declamatory effects to be found in the madrigals of Gesualdo da Venosa and Monteverde, it is, on the other hand, always truly madrigalian in style; the medium is not overstrained. Their music looks forward more than a century — Weelkes' daring harmonies made the antiquarians of 1830 think him demented, while Wilbye has a clear-cut antiphonal style that foreshadows Purcell or Handel — yet never does it cease to be a triumph of polyphonic art.

I have spoken of Weelkes and Wilbye in especial detail as they are perhaps the two pinnacles of English secular polyphony as Byrd and Gibbons are of the sacred. It is interesting to note that most of the older text-books place the smooth Wilbye at the top and most of the older madrigal-enthusiasts also put him at the top — but that people who have taken up with madrigals since the war prefer the exciting Weelkes; due no doubt to the fact that we have grown up to his queer harmonies. There is also the matter of Weelkes' versatility which is almost unique among the men of his age. He ranges from the grandeur and pathos of *O Care, Thou Wilt Dispatch Me* to the fairylike *On the Plains* or absurd and freakish things such as *The Ape, the Monkey and the Baboon*. The second part of *Thule, the Period of Cosmography* is in his most modern and astounding vein.

But what I hasten to add is that Byrd and Gibbons have also written madrigals, practically on a level with the greatest of these (and incidentally Gibbons wrote other things beside *The Silver Swan*, the superb *What Is Our Life*, for instance). And so have Tompkins and the lovable, sunny-tempered Morley.

2.

Most of us have undoubtedly heard madrigals sung, and excellently sung, but there is a further and greater delight: that of singing them oneself.

There is a great deal of music that lends itself to amateur performance, but nothing so much as the madrigal. First: madrigals are within the scope of any competent choral singer with a decent voice; and secondly: this music was written to be sung in the home and enjoyed by the singers. It is essentially intimate and in that resembles the string quartet; only it is livelier than quartet playing, for there is none of that chill air of the Leipzig academy which string-players are apt to bring into the room with them.

Madrigal-singing has a charm that is unique. Concert-goers, to whom Beethoven and Brahms are an everyday affair, find that a sudden plunge into the music — above all the English music — of the sixteenth century is a revelation. The queer modal harmonies, the "Merry England creepiness," the wayward rhythms and unexpected strikingly modern effects — all these things are at first so new that they blot out individual differences; the Elizabethan School seems like a single marvelous composer. Then, as the music becomes more familiar, we learn to distinguish more and more between the individual composers, till we could no more confuse Weelkes with Wilbye than Brahms with Schumann.

The fascination of this music is endless, but not enough people have discovered the joy of actually singing it. True, there are several amateur groups in New York, Boston and Philadelphia, who are meeting weekly and striving to sing this type of music, but to date they have not made their efforts sufficiently known to inspire others to emulate their fine endeavors.

It is truly exasperating, the difficulty of getting people to sing madrigals, though once they have tasted blood — so to speak — they can be very hard to get rid of, if you are going to have an efficient group with one voice to each part. This is necessary for two reasons. There is the intimate, chamber-music character of the music, and then there are the many cross rhythms. This means that they should not be conducted, for where two or three singers have different rhythms, a conductor will unduly stress one of these; besides, it is well to remember that this music was originally unbarred. A

small group of people who have practiced a madrigal sufficiently will finally be able, by a sort of telepathy, to get the time from one to another.

You do not necessarily need professionals; but it is no use minimizing the difficulties. Coming in on time is no joke when the time signature changes every other measure—and then there are modes. What so many people, who are new to the game do not grasp, is that this music must be sung by interval and not by key (which can only mislead you since the “apparent key” often changes, more bewilderingly than the time). “What key are we in now?” somebody asks; and if you reply: “We are not in any key — this is the transposed Mixolydian Mode,” you get no thanks. Then there is that involuntary tendency to convert all modes into the major or minor. In singing Mixolydian passages (which sound like G Major with a flattened leading-note), novices are apt to sharpen the F, and express some indignation that the *natural* is not written in as an accidental. Seeing that there is no sharp in the key-signature, their objection falls to the ground.

This type of key-signature and also irregular barring, constitute two of the distinctive features of Dr. Fellowes’ edition, and at first seem a little hard on one, but they are essentially right, as they give us an instinctive sense of mode and of correct emphasis. Still, the habits of a lifetime die hard, and I have generally found it advisable to run through the copies of a Mixolydian Madrigal beforehand, “naturalizing” the F’s, or if it be in the Dorian mode — the B’s.

Then there is the personal element. Everyone must be not only a musical, but a congenial person; in a choir this does not matter, but in a group of six the slightest element of discord is fatal. A madrigal society is as much of a test of group-solidarity as a camping trip, and as great a strain on the temper when things go wrong.

A successful evening, however, is enough to make you forget all difficulties. It should include a dip into something new, read at sight or looked over during the week, and hard work on some more famil-

iar pieces. Two stages are the most enjoyable: exploring a new find, and putting on the final polish. By then you know your part so well that you can listen to and look at the other singers, and that, apart from the pleasant feeling of intimacy, means a really musical performance. Other people will now want to listen to you.

If madrigals are too hard, then Ayres or Glees. These have none of the awkward modes, cross-rhythms and entries that make madrigals so alarming. But Glees are vastly inferior; they are English music in its decay. Madrigals are its golden age, and well worth the extra difficulty. Ayres are of the same age as Madrigals and far simpler — but also far less exciting.

Madrigals are worth the extra effort. Besides, you do not need to plunge the first evening into *Hard by a Crystal Fountain*, or *Thule, the Period of Cosmography*. Start instead with something easier. I recommend *On the Plains*, by Weelkes, for the purpose. It is short, relatively simple, and instantly captivating to anyone who hears or sings it.

3.

This article is concerned chiefly with the works of the English School, but no group should be content until it has explored among the much neglected foreign madrigals — Orlandus Lassus, Marenzio, Vecchi, Gesualdo, Monteverde. Unfortunately, these have not been published in such explanatory editions as the English, and they are seldom performed in public, all of which makes the task of the amateur much harder, though, at the same time, more rewarding.

At this point, we can well imagine someone saying: “What part can the phonograph play in all this?” The answer is: a great deal. I have said, and I still say, that madrigals were meant to be *sung*, not merely listened to, but there is nothing like listening to good performances in between times, and some first-rate performances have fortunately been recorded.

To begin with, we have the Roycroft records of the English Singers. Although they were made too early for the best recording, the fine singing nevertheless makes up for this. A worse complaint is

(Continued on Page 269)

Some Prolific Musical Memories

BY PAUL GIRARD

WHILE many of the world's greatest musicians have had no musical memory to speak of, there are some names in music history which have credited to them truly gargantuan mental feats. When the twelve-year-old Mozart heard the *Miserere* of Gregorio Allegri in the Papal Chapel in Rome, he went home after the performance and wrote it down from memory. Considering the work was written partly for four and partly for five-voiced chorus with a nine-voice finale, that was no small accomplishment. But it only resulted in trouble for the child prodigy, for the *Miserere* was held so sacred that excommunication was almost a certain consequence of any attempt to transcribe it. There were at that time only two copies in existence, the one used in the Pope's Chapel during Passion Week, and a second owned by the King of Portugal. One day the young Wolfgang played the work before Cristofori, one of the papal singers. This worthy immediately informed the Mozart family of the serious nature of their son's offense, whereupon they decided to lay the case before the Archbishop themselves, before any trouble ensued.

An Unusual Disparagement

That is probably the only instance where a phenomenal power for musical retention was even for a moment looked upon askance. Since that time an outstanding musical memory has been recognized as no mean endowment. Today the outstanding musical memory is said to be possessed by the great Italian Maestro Toscanini, with the thirty-six year-old Eugene Ormandy, conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, holding second place, and the contemporary French composer, Ravel, running third.

Camille Saint-Saens, who frequented the salons of Paris at the time that Richard

Wagner was the lion of the day, is mentioned in the great opera composer's *My Life* as being gifted with unusual mental qualities. Says Wagner, "This gifted young French musician Saint-Saens combines with an unparalleled rapidity of glance with regard to even the most complicated score a not less marvelous memory. He was not only able to play my scores, including "Tristan", by heart, but could also reproduce their several parts, whether they were leading or minor themes. And this he did with such precision that one might easily have thought that he had the actual music before his eyes." Saint-Saens could also play the lesser known works of Bach and Mozart and the forgotten early French and German composers from memory.

Prodigious Memory

Glazounov, the distinguished Russian composer, is also said to be endowed with a prodigious musical memory. He claims that he often wakes in the middle of the night and reconstructs in his mind, to the smallest detail, the music he has heard during the day. His complete reconstruction of the overture to Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*, after the death of the composer, is a well-known *tour de force* of music history.

Another familiar story of a feat of memory dates back to 1920, when all Paris was set up on its ears by the famous organist Marcel Dupre who in a series of ten concerts at the *Conservatoire*, played the complete organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach from memory. Ravel, it is claimed, can play any passage from the whole operatic literature of Russia on request.

It is of especial interest to note how Toscanini and Ormandy both were catapulted into conducting careers by their extra-

ordinary memories. Toscanini, as a young cellist in a small orchestra, was in the habit of playing with his music closed in front of him. Once the conductor, infuriated at what he considered insolence, sarcastically suggested that young Arturo play the whole program without music. He did, thus proving to the conductor and his fellow-orchestra men that one reading of a work was all that he needed to know the score by heart. It was at an opera performance in Rio di Janeiro that Toscanini made his inadvertent debut as a conductor. Because of political prejudices rampant in the South American capitol at the time, the conductor scheduled was unable to proceed with the performance of *Aida*. The orchestra men, knowing the unusual memory of their cellist colleague, pushed him up to the conductor's desk. Unostentatiously, but with complete self-assurance, the inexperienced conductor with not even a furtive glance through the score, took up the baton and the opera went on. The audience, which had been stupefied into silence by the appearance of the unknown young man stayed to cheer and applaud the thrilling performance.

Ormandy's First Memory Feat

History repeated itself in the case of Eugene Ormandy. A young violinist, he had just come over to this country from Hungary and was a member of the orchestra in a Broadway moving picture theatre. One night the conductor of the orchestra was taken suddenly ill. The violinist, Ormandy, at a moment's notice, was called upon to jump in and take his place. The slight blond young man, unabashed, put down his violin, went up to the podium, closed the score, and never having held a baton in his hand before, conducted Tschai-kowsky's *Fourth Symphony* from memory. The audience had come to see a moving picture; but instead, had heard the debut of one of our present-days most distinguished young conductors. Since that time Ormandy has continued to conduct entirely without score, often learning a whole symphony in a day or two. Verdi's *Requiem*, which takes about one and a half hours to perform, Eugene Ormandy learned in two and a half days, conducting a complete choral rehearsal of the work with not a note of music in front of him. Even the

complex scores of Mahler and Bruckner, for the interpretation of which, Eugene Ormandy has achieved an international reputation, he conducts from memory.

While the music world stands in awe of the vast number of works tucked away in this young maestro's mental storehouse, he himself, the latest of the distinguished hierarchy of musicians with phenomenal musical memories, bears this gift of the Gods in all modesty. It is not a *sine qua non* for a conductor, he explains, pointing to Koussevitzky as an example, but it is unquestionably a great advantage. It allows a conductor to communicate through his eyes with every man in the orchestra, thus setting up a current and a unity of feeling between all concerned that inevitably heightens and electrifies a musical performance. One has always sensed this added tensility resulting from the use of the eyes in Toscanini concerts, and audiences were quick to sense it again in this young, budding maestro, half the age of his venerable predecessor, who already is known to music-lovers throughout the country not only through his notable recordings of great symphonic works, especially the *Seventh Symphony* of Bruckner, the first recording of Bruckner made in the United States, but also through his concert tours and broadcasts with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.

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THE MUSIC SHELF

THE PIANIST'S MUSIC SHELF: *The Days of Schubert, Weber and Mendelssohn; The Days of Chopin, Schumann and Liszt*. Edited by Albert Wier. Published by Harcourt, Brace and Company. Price \$2.50 each volume..

THE first two books of *The Pianist's Music Shelf* were reviewed in our October issue. These volumes, part of a series of ten, are to take piano music up—as we previously stated—to modern times. Like the first two volumes, the third and fourth have been most carefully planned and worked out. The editor of this series has over a period of nearly thirty years successfully been compiling collections of music, and so is in a position to do notable justice to such a venture as has been planned, in this his latest piano anthology. One of the best features of these books is the printing and spacing of the notes—and the restful quality of the dark green ink that has been used instead of the regular black.

Volume Three covers the period of 1781 to 1809; the actual birth dates of the composers, who begin with Diabelli (1781-1858) and end up with Mendelssohn (1809-1847), and include such celebrities as Field, Kuhlau, Weber, Schmitt, Czerny, Moscheles, and Schubert. In all twenty-seven composers are represented and fifty-two compositions are included. Naturally, Schubert and Mendelssohn are more widely represented than the others.

Volume Four starts out with Chopin (1810-1849) and ends up with Rubinstein (1829-1894). Chopin, Schumann and Liszt occupy more than half of this volume, although twenty-six other composers are represented. There are sixty-seven selections in this unusual collection.

We highly recommend these books to the attention of the student and the amateur pianist, who will find many selections in them which have never appeared before in an anthology. Most of the compositions have a short introduction either relative to the composer or to the music which is both interesting and historically valuable.

—Paul Girard.

ON MADRIGAL SINGING

(Continued from Page 266)

as to selection — too many folk-song arrangements — not enough madrigals. And two of the finest records of all — Weelkes' *Hosanna* and *Hark All Ye Lovely Saints Above* have been withdrawn. The best of what remains is Morley's brilliant *Hard By a Crystal Fountain* (from *The Triumphs of Oriana*) and Byrd's *Through Amaryllis Dance in Green* with its extraordinary cross-rhythms.

A better collection in many ways is that entitled *Sixteenth Century Songs*, recorded by the St. George Singers (English Columbia). This group does not sing with the same spirit and individuality of the parts as the English Singers, but both the selection and the recordings are superior to the Roycroft Album. The fine flower of the English Madrigal School is assuredly represented in this set. Weelkes' *O Care, Thou Wilt Dispatch Me* is the crown of the collection — a work, written in 1600, and never surpassed in emotional expressiveness and mastery of chromatic harmony. There are a few more madrigals, sung by this group, in the Columbia History of Music, Volume I — notably another magnificent Weelkes, of a much more joyous nature: *As Vesta Was from Latmos Hill Descending*, his contribution to that unequal and sychophantic but full-of-plums collection of madrigals dedicated to Queen Elizabeth: *The Triumphs of Oriana*.

With regard to the recordings of foreign madrigals, at present available in this country, we are not so fortunate. A few — not however the best — of Gesualdo and Monteverde, and very little else. Most of what exists is performed by large groups. I have already enlarged on how mistaken this is — but the practice is especially bad when it comes to recording. Just as a small singing group records more clearly than anything but a string quartet, so does a large choir sound woollier on the phonograph than anything except an organ. However — the two examples in *2000 Years of Music* (Parlophone), one by Gesualdo and one by Hassler, are fair in this respect — there do not seem to be more than two or three voices to each part, and the result is fairly sharp. And if

the present repertory of available foreign madrigals is small, it probably will not be for long. Monteverde *Sestina* collection has already been extensively reviewed in these pages — although this set cannot be classed as madrigals in the strict sense of the word.

But there are other encouraging signs. More and more historical anthologies of records are appearing; the latest one — the superb *Anthologie Sonore* — so far includes little in the way of madrigals (in spite of some earlier foreshadowings of the madrigal form — an interesting *Song of the Birds* by Jannequin, and some exquisite “profane” trios for voice, viol and trombone, by the masters of the fifteenth century Franco-Flemish School), but it may not improbably go far in this direction in its second and third year publications.

And eventually, such recordings will fire the amateur to sing foreign madrigals, as other performances and recordings in the past have fired him to sing English Madrigals.

ON CADENZAS

(Continued from Page 263)

Mancini tells us that a cadenza should never be long; and perhaps its best qualification is brevity. Certainly as the display form of the concerto was adopted by great composers, and given a significance it did not properly own, it would seem the part of wisdom for the player to add as little as possible. The original purpose of the cadenza is lost in the past — we of today think musically in a different idiom than that of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. Though Mr. Kreisler has shown ability to compose in the style of earlier centuries, it offends us when he passes his own works for genuine antiques. We want to hear Vivaldi, Scarlatti and Tartini; but we want to hear them straight. We are not interested in what they *might* have written. A performance of the Brahms or Beethoven violin concerto without any cadenza at all is, of course, unthinkable, for a cadenza was intended in the scheme of the work; but the cadenza should be short rather than long, lest the performer steal the attention that belongs to the composer. When, however, a cadenza is added to

Bach's *Concerto for Two Violins*, we are as indignant as if the performers had added embellishments of their own to the heavenly second movement. A Dolmetsch may find historical justification for his introduction of cadenzas into the preludes in the *Well Tempered Clavichord*; still, most of us prefer an armless Venus. Why not treat all unnecessary filigree as a lost — and fortunately forgotten — art?

A famed violinist once said, if he had his way, he would stop short of the cadenza and remark to the audience: “Ladies and gentlemen, we have reached and sustained the *fermata* — consider the cadenza played” — and then proceed with the *coda* or finale of the movement.

Mr. Peter Hugh Reed,
The American Music Lover

Dear Mr. Reed:

Just a word of thanks for the article which appeared in your last issue, on Mme. Lotte Lehmann.

It was a charming article, but would you permit me to make one correction? You state in the article mentioned, that Putnam's are planning to publish “Anfang und Aufsteig” in English. As a matter of fact Putnam's were interested in this volume provided Mme. Lehmann could bring it up to date, but her professional activities in the musical field have kept her so busy that it has not been possible up to this time.

I would appreciate it if you could correct this small inaccuracy.

With cordial greetings and thanks.

Sincerely,

CONSTANCE HOPE.

(Personal Representative for
Mme. Lotte Lehmann).

New York, N. Y., December 14, 1935

* * * *

To the Editor,
The American Music Lover

Dear Sir:—

Mr. Kozlenko, in his review of the Trio from the “Musical Offering” of Bach (September issue) seems to have overlooked what I believe is its chief defect. Nor has Mr. Kozlenko brought this fact to bear in his answer to Mr. Mathews in the November issue. He recommends to Mr. Mathews that he study the score. I wonder if Mr. Kozlenko has himself studied this score thoroughly. It was well for Mr. Kozlenko to reprimand the Italian Trio for their transcription of the flute part to the violin. But if he has indeed looked at the score has he not noticed a much more serious breach of taste, along the same lines, namely, the substitution of the ‘cello for the original violin part, necessitating frequent transcription to the octave below and occasioning at times excessive thickness?

Yours very truly,

ANTHONY SHEPPARD.

Cambridge, Mass., December 23, 1935

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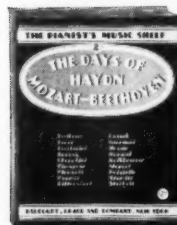
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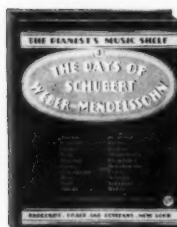
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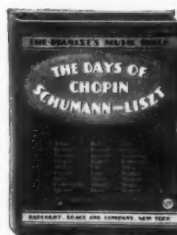
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Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this Issue: LAWRENCE ABBOTT, ARTHUR V. BERGER, A. P. DE WEESE,

PAUL GIRARD, WILLIAM KOZLENKO, PHILIP MILLER, PETER HUGH REED

ORCHESTRAL

BACH: *Fugue in G Minor (The great)* from the *G Minor Fantasia and Fugue* for organ. (Arr. by Stokowski); played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction of Leopold Stokowski. Victor disc, No. 1728, 10-inch, price \$1.50.

HERE is the companion record to the earlier Stokowski release of the other famous Bach *G Minor Organ Fugue*. The idea of labeling that overwhelming performance as the "Little G Minor" must have seemed very odd to those unfamiliar with the big one. Both are favorites with organists—but most of us, who hear the organ only in church, rarely stay for the postlude. Dr. Stokowski is taking this matter into his own hands, and soon there will be no excuse for ignorance.

There is a certain expansiveness—a triumphal sweep—about this *Fugue*, which sets it above its companion. Besides being somewhat longer, it has a more elaborate subject; and, while one could hardly say that it shows greater mastery, there is an impressive freedom in the handling of the voices, which—though we do not miss it in the other—is conspicuously present here.

It seems hardly necessary to praise the recording. The Stokowski following will want the disc before they hear it, and they will surely not be let down. It is a worthy addition to the Philadelphia list.

—P. M.

* * * *

BAX: *Overture to a Picaresque Comedy*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Sir Hamilton Harty. Columbia disc, No. 68389D, price \$1.50.

ARNOLD BAX, one of the greatest of living English composers, has been shamelessly neglected by the English re-

cording companies. Why the English have failed to demand one or more of his inspired symphonies on discs up to this time is one of those things which is difficult to explain. This overture is not Bax at his greatest—at the same time it is not second-rate Bax. How a tonal poet of his calibre came to turn his attentions to picaroons and adventurers may be somewhat puzzling, but the music evidences the fact that he did and since its vivacity and verve are of a sufficiently telling quality to impress—we need not censure the composer. (Glorifying the rogue or adventurer in music has been done before—according to many, notably by Strauss in his *Don Juan*.) After all, the movies have been doing this sort of thing for years—and the radio consistently endorses such characters for the edification and delight of our very young.

Most modern composers tackling a theme or implied idea like this (Bax names no actual comedy) would write largely with their tongues in their cheeks, but Bax has never written anything—no matter how slight—which was not impelled by imagination and inspiration. One might like to know just who this "hero" was—since it would provide a very interesting slant on the composer's make-up, a slant which none of his major orchestral works so far suggest. But since he prefers to leave us in the dark—we can only conjecture.

The playing and recording of this work are excellently realized, particularly considering the elaborate orchestration. W. R. Anderson, writing in *The Gramophone* recently, called this record "a frolic . . . a cocktail for the Baxian banquet" he hoped the recorders would serve before long. To this, we would like to add—it's a cocktail made up of tasty ingredients which can often be agreeably taken.

—P. H. R.

BORODIN: *Prince Igor* — Choral dance No. 17 (3 sides); and MOZART: *Mass in C Minor*, K-427—*Qui tollis*; sung by the Leeds Festival Choir with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Two Columbia Set No. 238, two discs, price \$3.00.

A RECORDING of the *Polovetzki Dances* is certainly no novelty; nor is a version using the chorus, as in the opera, precisely a new idea. The features of this release are the singing of the huge Leeds Festival Choir, and the conducting of Sir Thomas Beecham. This distinguished leader is a man of tremendous enthusiasm, and, we understand, this music is one of the objects of his especial love. In any case, one could not ask for a more carefully planned or a more vitally realized performance.

In the opera, *Prince Igor* is taken prisoner by Kahn Kontchak, who treats his noble captive as a guest. The *Polovetzki Dances* are performed by the Kahn's slaves, to entertain Igor. They form the most popular portion of the score, and have often figured on the programs of noted ballet companies—among others that of Diaghilev. In the early days (the opera was produced in 1890) the dances were considered a rather strong dose of barbaric revelry; but the world has become accustomed to this sort of thing. Still very much alive, this music is no longer shocking.

The Mozart *Mass*, represented on the odd side, is one of the most admired of the composer's choral works. Though written in honor of his marriage to Constance Weber, the work was not finished, the missing parts being supplied from one of his older *Masses*. As a whole, the *Mass* shows a diversity of style and feeling—it is hard to reconcile with this dignified chorus the very unchurchly *Et incarnatus est*. The work has, nevertheless, called forth great praise from those who have been fortunate enough to hear it. Koehel tells us that its crowning glories are the five-voice *Gratias* and this eight-voice *Qui tollis*. He does not hesitate to compare them to the finest sections of the *Requiem*. Like the *Requiem*, this movement shows that Mozart had been profitably studying his Bach. He

has caught here something of the restless urge of the great *Kyrie* in the *B Minor Mass*.

The recording, we are told, was taken at the actual performance of the Leeds Festival. The English Columbia Company has pointed with pride to this achievement as the most successful attempt yet made to capture a public presentation. We do not for a moment doubt that they are justified in their claims, as it is high above the average. The balance of chorus and orchestra is very fine indeed; and if the choral tone is not as pointed as it might be, this is probably due to the size of the choir. It would, however, be pleasant to catch just one word in the *Prince Igor* music, to reassure us that the chorus is singing English. The Latin in the Mozart is beyond reproach.

—P. M.



SIR THOMAS BEECHAM.

DVORAK: *Slavonic Rhapsody*, Op. 45, No. 3 and *Legende*, Op. 59, No. 3, played by Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Columbia Set No. 239, two discs, price \$3.00.

IT is always with a great deal of emotional satisfaction that we view the appearance of a composition—new on records—by a master of the stature of Dvorak. It is the inevitable fate of composers, even greater ones than Dvorak, to have among their many prime compositions several works of secondary import-

ance. And it is unusually the lesser valuable pieces, unfortunately, that have, in a way, established their writers' reputations. The citation of names would only emphasize the obvious without adding an iota to what we already know. Dvorak—like Sibelius, Beethoven, Bach, Tschaikowsky, Rachmaninoff, Ravel—is a victim also of this hysterical adulation by persons who have selected only those works that are least representative of his genius. It must be startling, therefore, to certain of his avid partisans to learn, from time to time, that he has composed works that are worthy of greater admiration and attention than the ones they have selected for approval. To the musician and, no less, the progressive music-lover, however, it is always something of a musical treat when a new and heretofore unheard composition of an important writer is presented on discs.

The *Slavonic Rhapsody* is, at this juncture, a good case in point. This work is by no means one of the best that Dvorak has written, but it is a composition that contains music of merit and satisfaction. It is a vibrant example of Dvorak's genius for tonal coloring and brilliant instrumentation. The music is full of vitality, and if, in certain sections, we are struck by its pedestrian treatment, a seeming lack of inspiration on the part of the composer to develop some of the musical subjects to better use, the work, on the whole, with its ingratiating simplicity of thematic material, its colorfulness of instrumentation, tends to overshadow some of the faulty details in it.

Dvorak himself, curiously enough, was aware of its inherent inspirational shortcomings for he, like his biographer Karel Hoffmeister, sought to justify to "his enemies" that this (as well as the other two of the set: D and A Flat) were as well written as his Slavonic Dances which preceded the Rhapsodies. But, as a matter of fact, the Dances are by far superior music, and more perfect examples of Dvorak's national genius. However one may be inclined to stretch the argument, one thing is obvious: this present work is an interesting specimen of Dvorak's orchestral genius and a noteworthy addition to the small library of his recorded music.

The *Legende, Op. 59, No. 3*, conversely, is a work framed within a smaller, al-

though happier spirit. The music is more flowing and the ideas seem to be less restrained. This composition is part of a set of ten pieces written for piano duet and orchestrated by Dvorak himself. They were composed in 1881 and dedicated to Hanslick, who will be remembered as the fervent champion of the music of Brahms and a bitter foe of Wagner and Bruckner.

Needless to say, both the *Rhapsody* and the *Legende* are played skillfully by Beecham and his men: the recording is ample and the rendition veracious.

—W. K.

* * * *

PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda—Dance of the Hours*. Victor disc 11833, price \$1.50.

IPPOLITOW-IVANOW: *Caucasian Sketches: In the Village, and Procession of the Sardar*. Victor disc, 11883, price \$1.50.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOW: *Song of India*; and MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana-Intermezzo*. Victor disc 4303, 10 inch, price \$1.00. All played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction Arthur Fiedler.

SUCH music as this is greatly enhanced by performances and recordings like these. Victor are to be commended on the series of recordings so far issued by the Boston "Pops".

Ippolitow-Ivanow (1859-1935), a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakow's, spent considerable time in the Caucasus, and while there took a deep interest in the music of that region. This suite, which he wrote under the influence of Caucasian folk music has long been popular. There are four movements to it. Perhaps Victor anticipates the release of the other two at an early date.

The sentimental *Song of India* gains very little in an orchestral transcription, however, listeners who prefer their music in an instrumental version will find this one gratifying.

—P. G.

* * * *

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 1 in E Minor*; played by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy. Victor set M290, five discs, price \$10.00.

VICTOR has done well to give us a modern recording of Sibelius' First, be-

cause the only existent one is outdated. The First Symphony marked the midway period of Sibelius' life. It was created at the end of the 19th Century. Although it looks forward to the 20th Century and the latter symphonic works of this Northern giant, it nevertheless pays its tributes to the romantic era that just preceded its creation. The influence of Tchaikowsky is felt in this work, but it is not prevalent. Sibelius is too strong, too pre-eminently masculine to descend to Tchaikowsky's level. The whole work is filled with conflict—and is "a kind of revolt" against the symphonic music of the latter part of the 19th Century. Analysis of the work here would be superfluous—since it has been performed so often by the major symphony orchestras of the country.

Ormandy stresses the strength and bigness of the first movement, its intimation of desolation and loneliness in Nature. He marks its drama in energy—and thus gives us a markedly different reading than Kajanus' who felt and conveyed an inner lyricism in this music. It is in the second movement that we find Ormandy rising

to interpretive heights—for here he conveys the otherworldliness of the music in an unforgettable manner. The vivacity of the *scherzo* is nicely taken care of, and the last movement is given an appropriately triumphant reading. One would have liked it better if Mr. Ormandy had been able to co-ordinate this last movement more, but the blame cannot be placed on his shoulders. For undeniably this last movement—quite apart from its aural bigness—is lacking in the inspiration which is to be found in the rest of the symphony.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

STRAUSS, Joseph: *Aquarellen Waltz*; played by Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy. Victor disc 8867, price \$2.00.

JOSEPH STRAUSS was the brother of Johann Jr., the famous 'Waltz King'. Like his brother, he was also a prolific composer of dances—particularly of the waltz genre. His success however was never as great as his brother's, the reason for which might be attributed to his consist-

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ently delicate health. This waltz offers a pleasant eight minutes. It is optimistic and buoyant in character, and Ormandy seems to enjoy playing it. The recording is top notch.

—P. G.

* * * *

CONCERTO

BACH: *Concerto No. 2, in E Major*; played by Bronislaw Hubermann, violin, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Issai Dobrowen. Columbia Set No. 235, three discs, price \$4.00.

VIOLINISTS appearing hereabouts in concert can take a cue from the recorders in making up their programs. True, not all of the recorded works are masterpieces, and there is the expected quota of thrice-familiar items, but a list of the violin concertos released in the last year is a heartening sight. This Bach *E Major* is by no means a first recording—Menuhin, Elman, Kulenkampf and Zighera have done it complete, while the first movement, played by Bratza forms part of Volume Two of the Columbia History. But if it were only to stimulate interest in one of the earlier versions, this set would be worth while. As it happens, it does more than that.

Bach, like Mozart, had the secret of combining musicianship and display. There can be no doubt that his *Concertos* were intended primarily as show-pieces; yet the composer never descends to empty bravura. The music is filled with excitement and life.

The first movement is a kind of contest between the soloist and the orchestra—to test their ingenuity in making the most of the material in hand. Schweitzer finds in it the “unconquerable joy of life.” The *Adagio* belongs to the *Chaconne-Passacaglia* family, though the treatment is very free. “What was most probably in Bach’s mind,” says Parry, “was to make the subject which is given to the basses a kind of text or psychological entity which recurs persistently in what the French happily call an obsession, to which the violin solo constantly discourses in answer, as though arguing the contention of the basses from different points of view. The slow move-

ment of the *E Major Concerto* might even be compared with the ‘dialogues’ in the *Cantatas*, or perhaps even more aptly with the slow movement of Beethoven’s *Concerto in G*.” The Finale is a kind of *Laendler*, full of happiness and verve.

Your choice of a recording of this *Concerto* naturally falls between this set and the Victor version by Menuhin, and will be determined by your approach to Bach. If you are a purist you will undoubtedly prefer Menuhin, whose playing is more finely grained, and whose conception is more in the chamber style of tradition. His tone is more clearly etched against the orchestral background; and the orchestra is a smaller one, using the harpsichord in preference to the piano of the Hubermann set. But those who enjoy a good roistering country dance will enjoy Hubermann’s Finale, and if you like lots of bottom to your music, you will find it here.

—P. M.

* * * *

CHAMBER MUSIC

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet in D Major, No. 3, Opus 18*; Played by the Budapest Quartet, Victor Set No. 289, three discs, price \$6.50.

BEETHOVEN composed two sets of quartets—consisting of three in a set—under the single title of Opus 18. The entire series was conceived about 1798, although Grove places the date rather earlier. It is certain, however, that they were published in 1801; the first three in the early summer, the last three in October. They thus fall within the same creative span as the violin sonatas, Op. 12, the piano sonatas from the *Pathétique* to the *Pastoral*, the piano concertos in *B Flat*, *C* and *C Minor*, the *Septet*, the *First Symphony*, *Prometheus*, and the *Mount of Olives*. This period is significant, for it reveals the remarkable elasticity of Beethoven’s creative genius.

The architecture of these quartets, although modelled in part on that of Haydn, is already striking for its unique and individual structure. One is also aware of the young composer’s ingenious workmanship, as a quartet-writer, and his maturity of thought. But what is even more significant is that, each of them, in the process of

individual gestation, comes closer to the ideal of what a quartet should really be like. The balance between the four instruments, for example, is much more integrated than any of the quartets of either Mozart or Haydn; the melodic line, moreover, is firmer and more widely distributed, and the harmonic content, although less luminous, is much more serious and involved. The development of each subject already manifests Beethoven's predilection to do the unusual, to get away—as it were—from certain orthodoxies which distinguished, in many ways, the chamber music of his great preceptors, and already to play with certain harmonic combinations which are to become identified later as typical mannerisms of Beethoven's composition. Each quartet, in this series, reveals a novel albeit homogeneous plan, and though each is related to the other in time, and each is a member of the same family, no two are really alike, either in mood, character, or expression. On the whole, the group is, as W. H. Hadow says—"a good example of the skill with which Beethoven first rouses, then baffles, and then satisfies our expectation."

Although the present Quartet is listed as the third, it was really the first in order of composition. The Budapest Quartet perform this work with enthusiasm and distinct musicianship. A tendency, usually patent in less experienced ensembles, is to play this work, as well as any of the others in this series, with much more tenderness, because, we presume, they were taught that in these early works is manifest character which suggests more of Haydn than it does of Beethoven. But this is not true. The ruggedness, the soaring melodic flights, the profound contrast of dynamics—all attributes of the later matured master—are here in evidence. The work, of course, is youthful. But we get no feeling of precocity in the music, rather a maturity—of conception, plan, and fulfillment. It is meditative yet smooth; deep with feeling yet sprightly and vernal.

The members of the Budapest Quartet are thorough musicians in that they enter into the spirit of the composition with true and firm intuition. Aside from the interpretation—which is as near perfect as one can possibly expect—the actual perform-

ance of the music is peerless. In this, of course, we owe much to the amazing mechanical perfection of the recording itself, which, for clarity and brilliance, cannot—at least for the present—be surpassed.

—W. K.

* * * *

BRAHMS: *Cello Sonata No. 1 in E Minor*; played by Emanuel Feuermann and Theo Van der Pas. Columbia set 236, three discs, price \$4.00.

THIS was the first of Brahms' seven duosonatas. It was written in his thirty-third year, and — according to Daniel Gregory Mason — is the first chamber work of his "Young Manhood." Brahms wrote the work for a friend who was an ardent amateur cellist.

Although the music flows freely enough, and is harmonically bright in coloring, there is both a solemn and dark quality to the work, occasioned by the frequent depth of writing for the cello. The poise of this music is both notable and noble. There is no bombast, no violent contrasts, nor technical display. The poetic quality of the first two movements is one of calm assurance, and the finale is fugal in form and highly contrapuntal in style: more intellectual than emotional in content. The test of the cellist is in this last movement, for its force and brilliance require absolute soundness of technique and eminent artistry. This, Feuermann truly has. His playing, of this work is in fact not only brilliant, but poetically consummate. For this reason, as well as for the fact that the piano part is most effective and aurally gratifying, it is unfortunate that the balance between the two instruments was not better realized in the recording. And particularly in lieu of the fact that Van der Pas, the pianist, is such a splendid collaborator. The recording is commendable for its clarity—and the reproduction of the low tones of the cello—it must be admitted—is unusually realistic.

This should prove a welcome addition to the recorded catalog of Brahms' Chamber Works. And now—let's have the more mature *Cello Sonata in F Major, Opus 99*. A recording of this is long overdue.

—P. H. R.

MOZART: *Quartet in D Major* (K-575) played by the Kolisch String Quartet. Two Columbia discs (Set No. 237). Price, \$3.00.

THE lavish encomiums that were showered on the Kolisch Quartet during its initial American tour last season appear from the present recording to have been exceedingly well founded. The members of this ensemble have a directness as well as a subtlety which are most appropriate for the genuine interpretation of Mozart. There is none of the effeminate, genteel quality, the specious gracefulness which often characterizes performances of this composer's master works. The Kolisch Quartet is entirely unmannered, precise but lyrical, and most obedient to the composer's intention.

The famous *D Major Quartet* is extraordinarily serene, except in its last movement, even for Mozart. There emanates from this music a gratifying breath of freshness, of consummate ease. The alternation of conflict and order, the conflict finally resolved into the level of order—a process which is singularly characteristic of Mozart's music and one of the chief causes of its magnificent appeal—is less obvious here, in all but the last movement. That is to say, the restless emotions which constantly alternate in Mozart with the more poised ones—the former, however restrained, being finally disciplined until they are absorbed, as it were, into the latter—are here less in evidence than for instance in the *C major* or *G minor* Quintets.

The recent attention given to the chamber music of Mozart by domestic recording companies is much to be encouraged. This music, like the last quartets of Beethoven, requires study and familiarity before the listener may penetrate below what is apparently a pleasing and delightful surface to the underlying significant form.

—A. V. B.

PIANO

BACH: *Aria—Up! arouse thee! give thy heart into Jesus' loving keeping*, from *Cantata* No. 155 (Arr. by Cohen); and *Fantasia* No. 4, in *C Minor* (Arr. by Petri): played by Harriet Cohen.

Columbia disc, No. 68388-D, price \$1.50.

WIRF, *mein Herze, wirf dich noch in Hoechsten Liebesarme* is the somewhat cumbersome title of the Cantata Aria which Harriet Cohen has transcribed and recorded here. The Cantata, *Mein Gott, wie lange*, was written for the second Sunday after Epiphany. The aria, says Schweitzer, "breathes a quite sensuous passion. The wild rhythm of the strings merges sharply into a long chord, which, however, does not express rest, but trembling and shuddering, while the bass now takes over the passionate theme. This procedure is repeated five times. The picture given in the text could not be represented more realistically in music."

The *Fantasia in C Minor* is a much elaborated version, by Petri, of one of the clavier *Preludes*. The original is to be found in Volume XXXVI of the Bach Gesellschaft edition. It is an effective and showy bit—much more so in its present guise than in its first estate. Played as Bach wrote it, and on the harpsichord, it would probably not remind us of Beethoven and Chopin.

Miss Cohen enjoys a considerable English reputation as an exponent of Bach. Indeed, a number of the foremost British composers clubbed together to make her a book of Bach transcriptions. Though a pupil of Tobias Matthay, she has not the rhythmic poise of Harold Samuel or her illustrious cousin, Myra Hess. In the Aria the tendency to rubato smacks of Chopin rather than Bach. Her playing is, however, clean and well recorded, and her selections are certainly welcome.

—P. M.

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CHOPIN: *Etude in A Minor*, Op. 25, No. 11; *Etude in E Flat Major*, Op. 10, No. 11; *Etude in G Sharp Minor*, Op. 25, No. 6; played by Josef Lhevinne. Victor disc, No. 8868, price \$2.00.

MUCH has been written about the *Etudes* of Chopin, and especially about the one in *A Minor*, Op. 25, No. 11. Huneker likens it to the screaming of the winter wind; while Friedheim finds in it "the picture of a revolution with tragic outcome, from the first weirdly muffled call, sousing as in the distance, with its choral-like echo,

to the resonant booming of the passing-bells, and the blood-steeped closing chords." As usual in the *Etudes*, Chopin has built an essentially musical structure around a technical problem. The problem, in this case, is in the right hand, while the left paints its picture of storm and stress. Mr. Lhevinne, apparently, feels differently about the "weirdly muffled call," as his playing of the opening notes is full and strong.

The two studies on the reverse side are in marked contrast. The first, though labeled Op. 10, No. 6, is in reality Op. 10, No. 11. It is a study in touch. From beginning to end it is a series of arpeggiocords. Of it Huneker has written rhapsodically. "A musical Corot. . . The color scheme is celestial, the ending a sigh, not unmixed with happiness. . . This nocturne should be played before sundown. . ."

The *G Minor Etude*, Op. 25, No. 6, is a study in double thirds. To quote once more from Huneker: "In all piano literature there is no more remarkable example of the merging of matter and manner."

It is good to hear Mr. Lhevinne in this music, for he ranks with the foremost Chopin players of his time. There is a more delicate side to his art which still remains unrecorded, but this disc will convince all hearers of his technical prowess and the healthy grandeur of his playing. The crashing figures of the *A Minor*, the gentle romanticism of the *E Flat*, and the breath-taking thirds of the *G Minor* are recorded with clarity and power. But what happened to the B sharp on the end of the *G Sharp Minor*?

—P. M.

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MOZART: *Fantasia in C Minor*, K-396; played by Edwin Fischer. Victor disc, No. 8696, price \$2.00.

EDWARD MACDOWELL used the Mozart *Piano Sonatas* (and presumably he meant his remarks to apply to the *Fantasias* as well) as an example of how the public can be led by the nose. Any estimable history of music, he said, points to these *Sonatas* as masterpieces. "Now if one had occasion to read over some of the



PORGY & BESS

recorded by

Helen Jepson and Lawrence Tibbett

with the original chorus and orchestra
conducted by Alexander Smallens

ONE of the sensationally successful music dramas today is George Gershwin's American folk-opera, *PORGY AND BESS*. Based upon the play *PORGY* by DeRose Heyward, and with lyrics by the author and Ira Gershwin, the composer, George Gershwin has colored this tale of Catfish Row with music that is unique. It is Gershwin at his best, with new ideas and new melodies; with humor and tenderness, pathos and wisdom that portray the whimsies of Negro life with melodic and rhythmic perfection.

For the recording, two bright Metropolitan Opera stars, Helen Jepson and Lawrence Tibbett were chosen; and they present their songs with an authority that is really thrilling. You will enjoy every moment of the HIGHLIGHTS FROM *PORGY AND BESS*, from the serio-comic *IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO* to Bess's mournful lament *MY MAN'S GONE NOW*.



clavichord music of the period, possibly it might seem strange that Mozart's Sonatas did not impress with their magnificence. One might even harbour a lurking doubt as to the value of the many seemingly bare runs and unmeaning passages." He goes on to declare the Sonatas unworthy of the composer of the *Magic Flute*; far lower than anything ever written by Liszt.

Now if we are to judge these Sonatas by the standard of *Die Zauberfloete*, of course they do not stand up so very well; and we are more and more coming to the realization that Mozart had some very estimable contemporaries. And the Lisztian analogy seems a bit hard; there are pages in Liszt that no virtuosity can save, while a stylist can bring music out of every measure of Mozart. Fischer is such a stylist, and he succeeds in making the music thoroughly delightful, if not overwhelmingly great. We may feel that the modern piano is not the ideal as a medium, but we can hardly fail to be thrilled by the broad and ordered freedom, and the enchanting grace of the pianist's execution. His playing of the tripping scale passages is a real experience.

—P. M.

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POULENC: *Nocturnes and Improvisations* for piano, played by the composer. Two Columbia 10-inch records (17047-8D). Price \$1.00 each.

THIS appears to be music which M. Poulenc has written down with the proverbial left hand. It is pleasing, but rarely more; and most often it is merely pretty or sentimental. There is nothing of the imagination or at least the cleverness of the more familiar Poulenc, member of the erstwhile *Group des Six*, which burst upon the French musical scene the day following Armistice Day, 1919, equipped with every manner of prankish device to *épater les bourgeois* of a post-War public that was ready to be amused and startled.

Columbia could have made a more felicitous choice for a domestic re-pressing, for example, the delightful cycle of songs, *Le Bestiaire*, by the same composer. We are thankful for this group of pieces, however, if for no other reason than that it affords us a fine specimen of Poulenc's pianistic abilities.

The *Nocturnes* and the *Improvisations* are scarcely distinguishable from each other. Both as regards the form and the idiom we are reminded of Chopin's *Etudes* and *Preludes*, occasionally of the *Nocturnes*. There are in all four *Nocturnes* and four *Preludes* not numbered consecutively. We like most the *Nocturne* in C minor No. 4, which has the deliciously languid air of Erik Satie.

—A. V. B.

VIOLIN

STRAVINSKY: *Scherzo and Berceuse* from *L'Oiseau de Feu* (arr. by Stravinsky and Dushkin), played by Samuel Dushkin, violin; Igor Stravinsky, piano. One Columbia 10-inch disc, 17049-D. Price \$1.00.

HOWEVER hostile one may be to the practice of transcriptions or arrangements, one cannot but concede the excellence of the present ones. Early Stravinsky is, of course, as harmless and euphonious as full-blown impressionism, so much so, that the most conservative listener need not shy away from these transcriptions because the name of the notorious innovator is affixed to them. These morsels make admirable show pieces of the kind which violinists insist upon tacking to the end of their programs to send their listeners away feeling good, and with the firm conviction of the performer's virtuosity and brilliance.

Both the performance and the recording, as in the earlier transcriptions issued by Columbia, are almost beyond reproach.

—A. V. B.

VOCAL

GERSHWIN: *Excerpts from Porgy and Bess*; sung by Lawrence Tibbett and Helen Jepson, with chorus and orchestra under Alexander Smallens. Victor Album Set C-25, 4 discs, price, \$6.50.

IT has been some years since George Gershwin has given the world any music in a more extended form than that of the popular song, so it is not at all surprising that Gershwin's new "folk opera", being currently performed in New York by the Theatre Guild, has aroused considerable

stir. A number of musicians and critics have hailed it as the most mature work Gershwin has yet given us, and some have even called it the finest American opera yet produced.

There is a wide divergence of opinion concerning Gershwin's abilities as a composer of serious music — in fact, he is looked on with everything from contemptuous scorn to abject worship. But no one can deny that Gershwin has injected a new freshness and pulsing vigor into American music. To this reviewer, who is a great admirer of Gershwin's *Piano Concerto*, the opera *Porgy and Bess* is a little disappointing — partly because it is uneven in quality, and partly because much of its prominent melodic material is decidedly inferior to the musical score as a whole. Nevertheless it has many fine moments, and is an extraordinarily vivid characterization of life in Charleston's colored "Catfish Row".

The *Porgy and Bess* Album makes no attempt to reproduce parts of the opera as a continuous musical story. It consists of nine separate *arias*, several of which show much closer affinities to musical comedy than to grand opera. Every note of the music has a strong native American flavor. You couldn't imagine it having been written by a composer of any other country. Yet in many instances the flavor consists of the less subtle musical devices which are common to the idioms of the Negro spiritual and the blues. It's a pity that Gershwin, during his career as a composer of serious music, has been so obvious and unimaginative in his use of certain features of American jazz — such as the flat seventh — which has led him into banality time and time again.

Throughout the album, Lawrence Tibbett's singing is magnificent. He has caught the proper mood for each song, and has made the music warm and living. The high point in the album is his rendition of the *Buzzard Song* — much of which has the primitive eloquence of Moussorgsky. He is equally at home in *It Ain't Necessarily So* — a minstrel-show equivalent of a Gilbert and Sullivan topical song, in which the words are more important than the music. He imparts a jaunty feeling of carefree poverty to *I Got Plenty of Nuttin'* — which, like the *Grand March* from

Aida, excites at first by its unexpected changes of key, but tends to become tiresome on repeated hearings.

Unfortunately, Helen Jepson's contributions are not so successful. Her voice is agreeable, her singing is good, she stays on pitch — which is not a universal custom among Metropolitan Opera sopranos — but she seems not to sense at all the nostalgic beauty of the lullaby, *Summer-time*, which is a masterpiece, and would have made the best disc of the album if it had been less mechanically and unfeelingly sung. Nor does she give us to understand, by her singing, that Gershwin's music has an earthly quality, or that it is an expression of primitive emotions.

Gershwin's chorus passages are effective — especially the insistent closing measures of the song, *A Woman Is a Sometimes Thing*. The orchestra doesn't always do full justice to the score.

—L. A.

* * * *

HUMPERDINCK: Excerpts from *Haensel and Gretel*, sung by *Die Duoptisten*, with orchestra accompaniments, and with special orchestral selections. Three 10 inch Victor discs, Nos. 25168-70, price \$2.25.

AS a holiday offering for children Victor imported these black label records of *Haensel and Gretel* music, and put them up in an attractive heavy paper folding album with a leaflet that gives the German and the English texts of the words. We hope they were stocked by the shops early enough to find room on many Christmas trees to gladden the hearts of countless children and their no less fortunate families.

These records give many of the most enchanting scenes of the little fairy opera — *Haensel and Gretel*, hungry, and left at home to work, sing old folk-songs and dance together; they gather berries and make garlands in the wood; the Dew Fairy sings a slumber song, and the children sing their evening prayer and go to sleep; the next day they discover the gingerbread house.

The Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Clemens Schmalstich, plays the *Witch's Dance* in Steiner's concert arrangement and the *Witch's Ride*. Except for one short instrumental interlude each vocal excerpt is given without a cut.

Both the soprano and the mezzo-soprano, who record under the name of the *Duo-p-tisten*, have agreeable voices and apply themselves with enthusiasm to these joyous tunes. They have been making many Electrola records of old German songs and duets from popular operettas for several years. This inexpensive little album of perennially fresh music is a decidedly good buy.

—A. P. D.

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MOZART: *Misera Dove Son!*; and *Vorrei Spiegarvi O Dio*; sung by Ria Ginster, with orchestra accompaniment conducted by Oskar Holger. Victor disc. No. 2871, price \$2.00.

MME. GINSTER, recently heard locally in her first concert, sings on this record two of Mozart's rarely heard concert arias.

The scena and aria, *Misera Dove Son!* (K. 369), written by Mozart in 1781 to the text of Metastasio's *Ezio*, was dedicated to his Munich patroness, the Graefin Baumgarten. In a serious, but not impressive, mood it tells of an exile grieving for her lost husband. Its melancholy mood is expressed in simple music and calls for sympathetic singing rather than great vocal prowess. Woodwinds reinforce the strings in the light orchestral accompaniment.

Mozart dedicated several of his 39 concert arias to Aloysia Weber, his first love. Among these is *Vorrei Spiegarvi, O Dio* (K. 418), written in Vienna 1783, as an insert in Anfossi's opera "Il Curioso in discreto." The text tells of a sorrowful maiden too fearful to give utterance to her grief. Mozart's orchestra, with its solo oboe, proclaims her inner feelings, while the voice sings broken phrases above it. The muted violins and plucked strings create the restless mood.

The phonograph is particularly valuable in making available to us for careful study such seldom heard yet thoroughly rewarding music, and Mme. Ginster, as her previous Mozartian records have shown, was the ideal singer to make these concert arias. Her vocal adeptness and restraint, her experiences and obvious enjoyment, make her one of the few Mozartian singers par excellence. Oskar Holger's unnamed

orchestra gives a properly balanced accompaniment. There are no flaws in the recording.

—A. P. D.

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PUCCINI: *La Boheme, Che gelida manina*; sung by Alessandro Ziliani, and *O soave fanciulla*; sung by Ziliani and Mafalda Favero, accompanied by members of La Scala Orchestra under Franco Ghione's direction. Victor disc, No. 2872, price \$2.00

AN excellent new tenor, Alessandro Ziliani (whose praises have recently been greatly sung in England), sings two first act *Boheme* numbers in thoroughly orthodox operatic style, and with typically Italian full-throated lavishness of tone. In the duet he is joined by the routinized and competent Mafalda Favero. They both give the music every bit of its just due.

The real superiority of the record is attributable to the remarkably brilliant and faithful reproduction of the strong voices and the large orchestra. The surface is noticeably silent. No better record of this ever popular music could be desired.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

PUCCINI: *La Boheme—O soave fanciulla*; sung by Geraldine Farrar and Enrico Caruso, and BIZET: *I Pescatori di Perle—Mi par d'udire ancora*; sung by Enrico Caruso. 12-inch disc. Price \$2.25.

STRAUSS, Richard: *Serenade* and BEMBERG: *Chant Venetian*; sung by Geraldine Farrar. 10-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

THE Boheme duet was made in 1912 when both Miss Farrar and Mr. Caruso were at the top of their form. These two artists often appeared together in Puccini's lyric opera during the years between 1907 and 1912, and both were much admired and praised for their singing and their interpretations of the roles of *Rudolfo* and *Mimi*. Miss Farrar's quality of voice was especially suited to the frail, pathetic *Mimi*. The plangent richness and unsurpassable sweetness of her tones seemed veritably to belong to the character, a fact that this recording not only reasserts, but proves for all time.

Caruso's singing of the aria from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers* dates from 1903. It is interesting in its revelation of the famous tenor's earliest style, which was considerably more lyric than in later years. The use of the *mixed* voice (or half falsetto) on the final top tones was later wisely abandoned.

Miss Farrar made Strauss' *Serenade* in 1927. This is an electrical recording. There is a great deal of charm to her singing of this popular song and considerable beauty of tone—particularly in the middle register. The Bemberg song was made in 1922. It is an acoustic recording. In our estimation it does not represent Miss Farrar's vocal artistry at its best—nor is the song of consequence.

—P. H. R.

WAGNER: *Tristan and Isolde—Liebestod*; sung by Kirsten Flagstad with orchestra conducted by Hans Lange. Victor disc 8859, price \$2.00.

WAGNER: *Walkeure — Ho-Yo-To-Ho* (Battle Cry); and STRAUSS: *Allerseelen*; sung by Kirsten Flagstad. Victor disc 1726, 10 inch, price \$1.50.

MME. FLAGSTAD made these recordings last Spring at the end of a busy season. They are her first American recordings, but let us hope not her last; because they do not do full justice to her glorious voice and glorious artistry. Recently, when she gave a recital in New York, Olin Downes—the critic—pointed out that there was in her voice “the suggestion of overuse.” That same suggestion is in these recordings. As Mr. Downes noted after her recent recital, so too can we after hearing these records: “There was much singing of the first order . . . phrases so modelled and tones of such a beautiful quality that they still haunt the ear . . . places where the tone lost its shimmer and fullness, when it sounded a little worn.”

Particularly disappointing to us is Mme. Flagstad's *Liebestod*, because of deviations from pitch and too much *portamenti*. The best of the three selections is Bruennhilde's Battle Cry. For here the singer's natural vocal endowment is most fully revealed, and so too is her remarkable technical assurance.

—P. G.

EDUCATIONAL

The Columbia History of Music by Ear and Eye, edited by Percy Scholes. Volumes 3 and 4. Columbia Sets No. 233 and No. 234 (8-10-inch discs to each set), price \$10.00 per set.

IN his review of the First and Second Volumes of Scholes' *History of Music* (originally devised for the Columbia Gramophone Co., Ltd. of London) Mr. Miller brought out an important point when he stated that Mr. Scholes has sought in these sets “to cover a limited ground more thoroughly,” rather than a wide territory in a superficial manner.

Volume Three, which is termed *From Bach's Sons to Beethoven*, is distinguished by Harold Samuel's performances of three excerpts from the pianoforte works of Bach's sons (*First Movement* from *Sonata in F Minor* by C. P. E. Bach, *Rondo* from *Sonata in E* by J. C. Bach, and *Slow Movement* from *Sonata in G* by C. P. E. Bach) and the *First Movement* from the *Sonata in E flat* by Clementi. Mr. Samuel's fluent playing of this early pianoforte music—so satisfying and so delightful—makes us wish that he was represented by more of this kind of music, (more especially of the elder Bach), on records.

The third disc in this set contains the *Andante* from Mozart's *String Quartet in D Minor* (K-421) played by the Leners. Without criticizing the music, which is veritably perfect in style, this selection seems to us a poorly chosen one as an only representative of the string quartet. Surely Haydn, who invented and developed the string quartet form, should have been the composer from whom an example of this type of music should have been selected.

The fourth, fifth and six discs of this set exhibit the symphony, the concerto and the overture. Mr. Scholes has chosen interesting material for these discs, and has been most fortunate in the realization of the performances. From Papa Haydn's *Drum Roll Symphony*, he has selected the *First Movement*, which undeniably represents the composer at the top of his form.

From Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* (K-622), he has selected the *Slow Movement*, which truly represents the composer at the height of his poetic powers. To Beethoven, Scholes logically goes for an *Overture*. The reason for his choice of the *Fidelio* is given in his booklet: it "is terser and more direct than the *Leonore* overtures, the (nominal) No. 3 of which is one of the really 'big' masterpieces of music." All three selections are competently performed by an unnamed Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Clarence Raybould, with Charles Draper as the soloist in the Mozart work.

Discs seven and eight exhibit the German *Lied*. These seem to us the weakest section of Mr. Scholes' set, primarily because they are sung in English translations which are none too happily mated to the musical line. Three songs by Schubert are included and one by Loewe. These are *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel*, *Memnon*, *The Trout* and *Prince Eugene*.

Volume Four, termed *Music as Romance and as National Expression*, opens with *Romeo's Reverie* and the *Fete of the Capulets* from Berlioz' *Romeo and Juliet Symphony*. This is expressively played by Sir Hamilton Harty and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Sir Hamilton and the same orchestra also perform Balakirew's *Russia*, (the last two discs in the set), a work selected to represent "nationalism in music." (This is the same recording released over a year ago by Columbia).

A Chopin Nocturne (Opus 15, No. 2) and a Nocturne by Field (who invented the form or was it just the name?) impeccably performed by Myra Hess, occupies disc three. Disc four and five contain *Lieder* by Schumann, Brahms and Wolf, again sung in English. These include Schumann's *Thou Art so Like a Flower* and Brahms' *On the River Boat* (*Auf dem Schiffe*), not too well sung by Dorothea Helmrich, soprano; Schumann's *To the Evening Star* and Brahms' *The Sisters*, duets, sung by Victoria Anderson and Viola Morris; and Wolf's *Night Magic*, *Give Praise to Him* and *Ah, in Springtime*, better interpreted than sung by Mark Rapheal, baritone.

The remaining disc, the sixth in this set, contains MacDowell's *A. D. 1620* from his *Sea Pieces* played by Miss Hess and

Dvorak's *Slavonic Dance No. One*, in its original form as a piano duet, played by Miss Hess and Sir Hamilton Harty.

Mr. Scholes, in planning these sets, has wisely striven not to go out of the depth of the people for whom the history was primarily planned. For this season, he has undoubtedly chosen the music for its illustrative, rather than for its absolute, value. There is no question that the sets are well planned and carefully executed, and will accomplish the purpose for which they are designed. Their appeal is broader, however, than just the educational field, and music lovers will do well to investigate the contents of the four volumes—so far released.

A word of praise deserves to be added for the booklets. Mr. Scholes has presented a clear and readable guide to the music. Long identified with educational activities in England, he has given us a work of distinction from all sides.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

MOZART: *The Violet*; FRANZ: *Stars with Little Golden Slippers*; sung by Olive Kline, and RUBENSTEIN: *The Dream*; BRAHMS: *My Love Is Green*; LOEWE: *Nobody Saw*; sung by Ruth Carhart. Victor disc, 10 inch, No. 24790, price 75c.

HANDEL: *Where'er You Walk*; and FRANZ: *Dedication*; GRIEG: *Our Native Land*; FRANZ: *Marie*, from *Hollis Dann Song Series Book 3*; sung by Conrad Thibault. Victor disc No. 11829, price \$1.50.

PURCELL: *Passing By*; FRANZ: *Two Dark Eyes* (*Bitte*); NELSON: *Mary of Argle*; and CLAY: *Gypsy John*; COURTNEY: *My Heart's in the Highlands*; *The Meeting of the Waters* (*Irish Folk Song*); JOHNSTONE: *Salute to the Flag*, from *Hollis Dann Song Series Book 3*; sung by Conrad Thibault. Victor disc, No. 11830, price \$1.50.

Here is a group of records from two recent Educational Lists issued by Victor, which will be of interest to music lovers.

It is good to see Olive Kline's name on Victor labels again (she has made a long list of children's songs besides this record) and to hear her fresh true soprano and admirable diction. Her rendition of *The Violet* is a veritable lesson in singing. Ruth Carhart sings her selections so well one resents the fact that the Brahms and Loewe songs were done incomplete.

Conrad Thibault needs no introduction to record buyers, for this admirable young baritone has already contributed some fine song records. His artistic renditions of four songs by Robert Franz should prove most welcome, even though the English translations are not outstanding, and so too should his renditions of selections by Purcell and Handel.

—P. G.

In The Popular Vein

By VAN

VOCAL

AAAA—*You Hit the Spot*, from *Collegiate and You Let Me Down*, sung by Kay Thompson. Brunswick 7560.

This vigorous and resonant-voiced songstress from the Coast, long popular over the air, makes her recording debut here, I believe, in a highly pleasing pair of numbers which she puts over with a grand rhythmic sense and with the assistance of a small group of hot instrumentalists who are very, very O. K.

AAA—*Where Am I?* from *Stars Over Broadway and Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie*, sung by James Melton. Victor 25185.

Those who have always felt that the personable and magnetic Melton would be a "natural" in pictures have been pleased to see their confidence justified by his unqualified success in *Stars Over Broadway*. Here, in the hit song from the picture and in the familiar cowboy lament, his opulence of voice and elegance of style prove him a popular singer of real distinction and one who should have unlimited future in pictures.

BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*I Dream Too Much*, and *Jockey On the Carousel*, both from *I Dream Too Much*. Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25197.

AAAA—*I'm the Echo*, and *I Got Love*, both from *I Dream Too Much*. Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25198.

Any month which brings recordings of a new Jerome Kern score cannot possibly be without interest, whatever the quality of the balance of the releases. The current film, *I Dream Too Much*, starring Lily Pons, has four tunes from the pen of this greatest of American melodists, and Whiteman has quite outdone himself in providing us with superbly tasteful and musicianly settings of them. The title song, *I Dream Too Much*, is the loveliest, the most ingratiating waltz tune to stream from the genius of Kern or of anyone else in years, *Jockey On the Carousel* is an extremely cunning *divertissement*, while *I'm the Echo* is one of those almost Mozartian tunes, of a disarming simplicity, and of which Kern, almost alone among modern songwriters, possesses the secret. The arrangements are entirely above reproach and Bob Lawrence's vocal in *I Dream Too Much* is genuinely thrilling. Red letter recordings if you don't mind a little really good music in your dance records.

AAA—*Life Begins At Sweet Sixteen*, and *I'm the Fellow Who Loves You*, both from the *George White Scandals* of 1936. Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 25190.

In the golden age of the DeSylva-Brown-Henderson song writing combine, Ray Henderson was the most surefire tunesmith in America. Since the regrettable smashup of this triumvirate, he has had his troubles in finding suitable collaborators—and still is, for that matter—but at least these two tunes are in his old vein, and, as such, have success written all over them. A bounce and healthy vigor which are—or should be—the most characteristic qualities of American popular music are invariably his, and these are his best tunes in a couple of years. Noble handles them in the way you wish he would handle more numbers, with excellent assistance from Al Bowlly and the trio.

AAA—*China Soy*, and *Jalousie*. Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra. Victor 25184.

The former is termed a "Chinese rumba" on the label, and I presume we'll have to take Cugat's word for it, although it's an idea, on the face of it, that does stagger the imagination a bit. It is, at any rate, a wryly humorous little tidbit that Cugat manages with skill, while the familiar tango, *Jalousie*, on the reverse, previously done by Reisman some years ago, is the sort of thing that's right in Cugat's territory, and he does a captivating job of it.

AAA—*Alone*, from *A Night At the Opera*, and *It's Dangerous to Love Like This*. Hal Kemp and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7552.

All the Kemp tricks are in evidence here aplenty, and his continued use of them bespeaks the favor in which they are apparently held by a considerable part of the dancing public, although being based upon idiosyncracies of rhythm and tone color, they become extremely monotonous in time to the analytical listener. Both numbers have heart rending vocals by Maxine Grey, who sounds enough like Deane Janis, of the Casa Loma air programs, to be her double.

AA—*I Built A Dream One Day*, and *Somebody Ought to be Told*, both from *May Wine*. Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 25200.

Sigmund Romberg still has plenty of tunes in his system, as *May Wine*, his current operetta, proves, but these two are far from being in any way distinguished, although the waltz, *I Built A*

Our Radio Dial

Time Indicated is Eastern Standard Time

SUNDAY—

- 8:00 AM—International Trio, Soloists
(NBC-WEAF)
- 9:30 AM—Chandler Goldwaite Ensemble
(NBC-WEAF)
- 12:00 AM—Salt Lake City Choir and Organ
(CBS-WABC)
- 12:30 AM—Radio City Music Hall (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—Symphony Orchestra under Frank
Black, Soloists (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:00 PM—New York Philharmonic Orchestra
(CBS-WABC)
- 3:30 PM—Metropolitan Auditions (NBC-WEAF)
- 4:30 PM—Piano Recital (NBC-WEAF)
- 7:30 PM—Fireside Recitals (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:00 PM—Master Musicians (BBS-WOR)
- 9:00 PM—Detroit Symphony with Soloists
(CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—General Motors Concert
(NBC-WEAF)

MONDAY—

- 11:00 AM—NBC Light Opera Company
(NBC-WEAF)
- 1:15 PM—Lucille Manners, soprano; George
Rasely, tenor (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:45 PM—Alexander Semmler, pianist
(CBS-WABC)
- 2:00 PM—Hessberger's Bavarian Orchestra
(NBC-WJZ)
- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:30 PM—Melodies from Foreign Lands
(NBC-WEAF)
- 3:30 PM—Terri La Francone, tenor (NBC-WJZ)
- 7:00 PM—Dinner Concert (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—The Voice of Firestone
(NBC-WEAF)

TUESDAY—

- 11:45 AM—Piano Recital (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:45 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:45 PM—Rochester Civic Orchestra
(NBC-WJZ)
- 4:00 PM—Walden String Quartet (CBS-WABC)
- 4:30 PM—Library of Congress Concert
(NBC-WJZ)
- 6:30 PM—Understanding Opera with Howard
Barlow (CBS-WABC)
- 8:30 PM—Vorhees Orch., Lawrence Tibbett
(CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—Sigmund Romberg, Deems Taylor
(NBC-WEAF)
- 10:15 PM—Ray Heatherton, baritone; Lucille
Manners, soprano (NBC-WJZ)

WEDNESDAY—

- 11:30 AM—U. S. Army Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—Chandler Goldthwaite Ensemble
(NBC-WEAF)
- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:00 PM—Rochester Civic Orchestra
(NBC-WJZ)
- 4:00 PM—Curtis Institute (CBS-WABC)
- 4:30 PM—U. S. Navy Band Symphony Orchestra
(NBC-WJZ)

- 5:00 PM—Concert Orchestra under Cesare
Sodero (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Kostelanetz Orchestra with Soloists
(CBS-WABC)
- 9:30 PM—Wallenstein's Sinfonietta
(BBS-WOR)
- 70:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)

THURSDAY—

- 11:30 AM—U. S. Navy Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 1:15 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble
(NBC-WEAF)
- 1:30 PM—Julia Glass, pianist; Phyllis Kraeuter,
cellist (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—Matinee Musicale (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:15 PM—Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra—
January 23rd and 30th (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:15 PM—International Trio (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:30 PM—John Herrick, baritone (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:00 PM—Music Is My Hobby (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:15 PM—Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra—
January 9th (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—Philip James Little Symphony
(BBS-WOR)
- 11:35 PM—Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra
(NBC-WEAF)

FRIDAY—

- 11:00 AM—NBC Music Appreciation Hour
(NBC-WEAF-WJZ)
- 1:15 PM—Concert Miniature (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:00 PM—U. S. Marine Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 4:00 PM—Vivian Della Chiesa (CBS-WABC)
- 5:00 PM—Thurn's Bavarian Orchestra
(NBC-WJZ)
- 7:00 PM—Dinner Concert
- 8:00 PM—Cities Service Concert (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Beauty Box Theatre (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Hollywood Hotel — Igor Gorin
(CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—String Sinfonietta — Wallerstein
(BBS-WOR)

SATURDAY—

- 10:30 AM—Mathay's Gypsy Orchestra
(NBC-WEAF)
- 11:00 AM—Cincinnati Conservatory of Music
(CBS-WABC)
- 11:30 AM—Whitney Ensemble (NBC-WJZ)
- 12:00 Noon—Abram Chasins, piano talks
(NBC-WEAF)
- 2:00 PM—Metropolitan Opera
(NBC-WEAF-WJZ).....
- 2:30 PM—Tito Guizar, tenor (CBS-WABC)
- 5:00 PM—Alma Schirmer, pianist (NBC-WJZ)
- 6:35 PM—Alma Kitchell, contralto
(NBC-WEAF)
- 7:45 PM—Hampton Institute Singers
(NBC-WEAF)
- 8:15 PM—Boston Symphony Orchestra
(NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Kostelanetz Orchestra with Soloist
(CBS-WABC)
- 9:15 PM—Russian Symphonic Choir
(NBC-WJZ)

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BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

It's the Best American Tradition

THERE was a time, not so long ago, when being a good neighbor was a real factor in getting America going — and keeping us on our way.

In that day a man and his sons might cut and hew the timbers for a new dwelling and frame them stoutly on the ground. But before the walls could be raised, before the roof could go on, these builders needed and received the help of their neighbors. It was given generously in the old Colonial "house raising."

The same necessity for being a good neighbor, for helping the other fellow whenever he needed help, was recognized in all departments of early American life. Days of labor and the use of teams were exchanged as conditions of the crops demanded. And in time of sickness, fire, drought, attack, each man was in truth his brother's keeper.

In spite of the specialization of modern times, the speed and the scope of business and social life, there is, more than ever, the need for the good old American virtue of being a neighbor. No longer are you called upon to help the other fellow frame and raise his house, or to fight shoulder to shoulder with him against a common foe. But it is your responsibility to support, as you are able, institutions that minister to his welfare and the welfare of his family as definitely as a pioneer ever helped his neighbors. Hospitals, clinics, day nurseries need and deserve your help . . . So do homes for the aged the blind, the incurable . . . So do the many agencies that build the youth of your community.

It's still necessary to be a good neighbor. And it's still possible. Support your Community Chest. Answer your local welfare appeals. Then you will be the best possible neighbor in your own neighborhood!

GERARD SWOPE,
Chairman, National Citizens' Committee.

MOBILIZATION FOR HUMAN NEEDS — 1935

